1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

critical ripening period and the early stages of the harvest, someone is always present to keep watch over the *padi* (Plate 15). At Rumah Nyala in 1949-50, there were 12 *bilek* families with substantial *langkau umai*, suitable for semi-permanent residence, while 14 others had less pretentious huts, which were only slept in during periods of special vigilance.

127. The months of November and December, when weeding is taking place, cover critical stages in the growth of the young *padi*. According to Iban notions, the *padi* plant is liable to become afflicted with a range of various illnesses (*tabin*), and they apply to these the same terms used to describe certain human ailments. Green smut, for example, which attacks and destroys single kernals, substituting for them large sclerotial masses of its own, is equated with warts (*butir*). Again, *padi* is often described as suffering from a cold (*renga*) or a headache (*pedra*). While the young *padi* is forming a careful watch is kept over the farm, and if any disease makes itself evident, rituals are at once performed. The general purpose of these rituals (*memali umai*) is to restore the ailing *padi* to health. If the trouble be serious, a clump of *padi pun* is taken to the long-house, placed in a shrine (*ranyai*), and the gods summoned to succour and treat it. It is then carried back to the farm to be re-planted, where prayers are uttered (cf. Para. 61), and magical potions scattered over the rest of the growing *padi*. At the same time magical rites directed at driving away insect and animal pests are widely performed.

Traps, and Other Protective Devices

128. During the period of weeding the men begin to turn to the devising of other measures for the protection of their crops. A common stratagem is the building of a strong palisade of stakes bordering those parts of the farm judged to be especially prone to attack by deer and pigs. Others wait until the panicles have emerged and then clear a lane, five or six yards in width, along the main farm boundaries. The theory is that animals are wary of exposing themselves by crossing this circumvallation, and that if they do take the risk there is a good chance of their being seen and chased away. Traps are also widely used, there being three main types:

(*a*) the *peti*, a spear-trap for pigs,
(*b*) the *bubong*, a large box-trap for monkeys,
(*c*) the *tinya*, a spring-pole trap for smaller animals.

Most popular of all is the *peti*. It consists of an upturned, forked sapling, one limb of which is embedded firmly in the ground, while the other, to which an extremely sharp, fire-hardened, bamboo spear is fastened, is held back at high tension, leaving a narrow space (about 24"—26") just wide enough to permit the passage of a pig; across this space is suspended a fine fibre, which when displaced by a few inches trips a trigger, and releases the spear (Plate 13). The setting of a *peti* involves very careful measurement, for it is so designed that the spear will strike the pig (*babi:* Sus barbatus) in its most vital part. These *peti* are scattered along the edge of a farm, and especially in those places where pig tracks have been detected. Because of the danger to wandering humans, warning signs (consisting of a cross-stick in a notched upright) are usually erected, but it is always necessary to move with caution when approaching an Iban farm, by other than the main paths. Not infrequently mock traps and signs are also erected, further to alarm and confuse the pigs. The *bubong* is a large box-shaped trap, built of stout poles or logs, and baited with cucumbers, pawpaws and the like; dislodgement of the bait trips the trigger and causes a heavy lid to fall, curting

2: Howell M-5 (ca. 1908)1908-1910
OC6 Iban OC6

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Whilst the champions are warming themselves the necessary arrangements are made by the responsible persons such as fixing the poles in the river for the champions to hold, and making temporary raised platforms for warming the divers should unconsciousness result from the prolonged immersion. The lawyers then lead the men out into the river where the water is about two feet deep and hold on to the poles that are to prevent them from drifting; the advocates take up their positions immediately between the two champions and, as soon as the advocates make the signal, the contest begins, the champions dipping their faces into the water. Whilst the contest is in progress fighting cocks are waved over the divers heads and krakar (the pieces of bamboo mentioned above) are thrown into the water towards the struggling men and the following incantation is rehearsed :—

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"Where are you whom I call whom I ask for aid?"
"You whom I mention you whom I send for?"
"You who are of gigantic stature whose single beard is the length of a rotan?"
"Whose eyes are as large as the moon?"
"Come from the seas from the region of the waters,"
"From Pontianak, from Sarawak,"
"From Pulau Po, from Pulau Datu,"
"Come all of you in your steamers,"
"Bring with you your men-of-war."
"Anchor at Lingga at Nanga Dua."
"Bring with you the crocodile's king and the *runtu* fish's king,"
"Bring with you the *smah* fish's king and the *tapah* fish's king,"

[p. 74]

3: Low G-5 (1844-1847) 1848
OC6 Iban OC6

When the fire has exhausted itself, and the ground is again cool, which, from the frequency of rain, is soon the case, the Dyaks collect, from the black and charred trunks of the trees, the smaller ones suited to the purpose, and commence making their 'pagar,' or fence, for the protection of the future crop against the inroads of the deer and wild hogs, which would soon injure and destroy it. The method generally used in constructing this fence, is by raising one pole above another, horizontally, and sustaining them in this position by stakes driven into the ground, at an angle, and opposite to each other, so that the bar rests upon the crutch formed by their crossing each other. The pagars, or fences, are about six feet high, and the bars about fifteen inches one above the other; they are strong enough to resist the encroachments of wild animals for one season: for more they are not required, being then split up, and used in the houses for fire-wood.

In parts of the country more populous than others, it frequently happens that the Dyaks have not, in their territory, old jungle; or it is at such a distance from their houses, that the labour of carrying the produce to them would be very oppressive in a country where the services of no domestic animal are available for this purpose. Such situations are not so laborious to prepare, but being destitute of that rich layer of vegetable mould, and the fertilizing properties of the burnt wood, are not nearly so productive. The pagars of these farms, in which bamboo

3: Low G-5 (1844-1847) 1848
OC6 Iban OC6

always abounds, are frequently made of this light and easily worked material, the ends being stuck into the ground, and supported by cross bars, which run along the whole length of the fence, and to which the perpendicular stakes are attached by lashings of rattan, or other suitable substance. The burning being finished, and the pagar made, though this latter operation is frequently delayed until the seed has sprung up, no other preparation of the ground is deemed necessary. The plough, and other instruments for turning up the soil, the inventions of nations more advanced in the art, are to them unknown; but if the former were introduced, it would be useless in many places, as the sides of steep hills are frequently chosen for the farm; and, in all cases, it would be unavailable while the natives continued to leave their fields after but one year's cultivation, as the labour of removing the trunks of the large trees, which are now allowed to decay in the field, fertilizing it as they crumble into earth, would not be compensated by the produce of the ground they occupy, if the field were not cultivated for a succession of seasons.

The padi seed, which is saved with the greatest care from the choicest of the preceding season, is planted in holes, made by a blunt-pointed stick, at the distance of from fifteen to eighteen inches apart every way. Three or four seeds are dropped into each hole by the women and children, who cover them by scraping a little earth or ashes over them with their feet. 'Jagong,' or

5:Roth E-4 (no date) 1892 OC6 Iban OC6

injure the paddy, amongst the rows of which it is sown: and as it comes in at a season when the rice with some is getting exhausted, and the second crop is not ready, it is of great use to the Dyaks, though not so much esteemed as rice as an article of food. On the larger collection of ashes they also sow the seeds of gourds (*gerrok*), pumpkins (*entekai*), a kind of melon without flavour (*junggat, kundu*), and cucumbers (*rampu*), of which they are very fond. These trail along the ground amongst the stems of the paddy, to which they appear to do no injury, and continue bearing for some time after the rice-crop has been gathered in. A small quantity of *pulut* is also grown by every family. It is a fine strong growing kind of paddy, but when cleaned and boiled is of a peculiar clammy nature. It bears a higher price than any other kind in the market, and is always eaten by the Dyaks cooked in green bamboos, as it is thought that the ordinary metal cooking pot spoils the flavour. The farm is tabued during the *tugal*.

After the seed has been sown, it is the business of the men to plant a fence (*raja*) round the farm to protect it from the inroads of wild animals such as pig and deer; this should not occupy much time, as the material is ready to hand, having been collected for the purpose previous to the burning, from the *débris* scattered on the ground.

There are many things which sorely try the patience of the Dyaks as they watch with unflagging interest the growth of their crops. It is true the pigs and deer are excluded by means of the wooden fence, but nothing short of the most untiring vigilance, and not always even that, can keep out the numerous climbing and winged pests, such as monkeys, squirrels, rats, and sparrows, some of which are sure to visit the farm as the paddy is ripening. Their sole remedy, such as it is, is to give a feast and propitiate the spirits in the usual manner. A miniature junk is built and filled with delicate morsels, the plagues are then besought to embark for some other country, and the toy is set adrift to float out to sea with the outward tide. During this ceremony the village is tabued for seven days in the same manner as is done when the purification for burning is performed.

The next thing is to build a *langkau* or farm house on some commanding or central situation where the family may reside without inconvenience off and on or altogether just as they please until the harvest is over. They have still weary duties to perform before they can hope to reap the fruit of their toil; but it too often happens that these are left to the women and children, while the able-bodied men seek other and more congenial occupation, *i.e.*, either follow a war-path, or journey

5: Roth E-4 (no date) 1892 OC6 Iban OC6

as the various houses are built according to a single scale and measurement and by a combination of labour, they rarely fail to present a uniform and regular appearance.[1]

There is always a ladder at either end of the terrace by which to ascend and sometimes one or more towards the centre of the *tanju* or open air-platform. The roof is thatched throughout with the same material—shingles or palm leaves—if the latter the *nipa* (*daun apong*) leaves are used where procurable, and where not (*dàunbira*) the *pandanus*. The flooring in some villages is made of palm trees split into laths (*nibong* = wild varieties of the *areca*); in other cases of cane or bamboo or even twigs. The laths of split bamboo allow a delicious current of air to permeate the apartment. The outer walls are of plank, the inner of bark. No nails are used, the beams or rafters are lashed together with rattans or secured by wooden pegs. The posts are innumerable and of hard wood. The village is surrounded at its base by a wooden palisade which is itself protected by *chevaux de frise* of pointed bamboo. The village is divided by a plank walling into two main portions, the front and the rear. The former partakes of the nature of a very wide verandah and is open throughout its entire length. The latter occupies the rear of the entire building and is sub-divided into apartments, one for each family. Between the plank wall and the edge of the *ruai* is the *tempuan* or footway, a narrow passage running through the centre so that a person may walk from one end of the village to the other without encountering any obstacles.

Every family thus possesses a compact little residence to themselves comprising a *bilieh* or room where they can enjoy privacy when they like, a *tempuan* or thoroughfare where they pound their rice and pile up their firewood, a *ruai* or verandah where they receive visitors, a *tanju* or open-air platform where they air their things and lounge in the cool of the evening, and a *sadau* or loft where they keep their tools and store their paddy.

The *bilieh* or private apartment is furnished with a swinging door which opens outwards and is closed by means of a heavy weight suspended to a thong to the inside. The door can be secured when required by means of a bar. If the room be unusually large, it may have two doors for the sake of convenience. Figures are sometimes carved or painted on the door—saurians among others, grotesque images of supernatural beings, and indecent caricatures of the human person. There is no window such as we understand, but a portion of the roof is so constructed that it can be raised a foot or two by means of a stick to let

[1] Kĭfah houses are packed close together and there are originally three in a row without any intermediate space. The floor is only four feet from the ground, and any one can jump in.

5: Roth E-4 (no date) 1892 CC6 Iban CC6

The *tempuan* or general thoroughfare is between the *bilieh* and the *ruai*. It is three feet in width and is paved with wood. It is furnished with a ladder or notched stick by which to reach the loft, a family mortar where the women pound their paddy with wooden pestles to free it from the husk, and a pile or two of firewood reared by the men for use inside. This passage is also used by the women to winnow their rice in, feed their dogs, and attend to their chickens, and by the men to wash the dirt off their feet when they come home from their work. The wall of the *tempuan* is sometimes elaborately painted in various patterns, and the spears of the family are thrust into the skirting board so as to be handy.

The *ruai* or verandah is in front of the *tempuan* and is as nearly as possible the same size as the *bilieh* from which it differs principally in being open on all sides and without any partition. It is therefore a cooler and more agreeable place and as such is frequented by both sexes for the purposes of conversation, discussion, and indoor pursuits. Female visitors are usually received in the *bilieh*, but male visitors are invariably received in the *ruai* and only enter the bilieh when invited to do so to be introduced to the women and to share the meals. They sleep in the *ruai* along with the boys and bachelors, and sit there all day when they have nothing better to do, conversing with the head of the family and chewing betel. The floor is carpeted with thick and heavy mats of cane interlaced with narrow strips of beaten bark. Over these are spread other mats of thinner and finer texture. There is a small fireplace between this and the next *ruai* for the men to warm themselves at when they get up, as they usually do, in the chill of the morning, before the sun has risen above the trees; the fire is allowed to go out in the middle of the day, but is revived towards the evening when it is getting dark, but still too early to light the torches.

Some *ruais* are provided with a *panggan* or bedstead with plank sides in one corner of the room for the men to sleep in, but this is not always the case. If the head of the family has made it for his own use and if he be a chief or rich man he will fix his gongs of various kinds around it for the sake of show; his weapons will be within reach and his war dress will hang from the roof where it can be seen to best advantage —a skull cap of wickerwork with its nodding plumes, and a skin jacket decorated with the tail feathers of the war bird of the tribe. But the most valuable ornament in the *ruai* by far is

quarter with rice and fill up with water and when it simmers cover it with leaves. Before the arrival of Europeans the Dyaks used earthen *prions* made by themselves."

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

CHAPTER III

MANNER OF LIFE

Dyak village house—*Tanju*—*Ruai*—*Bilik*—*Sadau*—Human heads—Valuable jars—Paddy-planting—Men's work—Women's work—House-building—Boat-building—*Kadjangs*—Dyak tools—*Bliong*—*Duku*—Weaving—Plaiting mats and basket-making—Hunting—Traps—Fishing—Spoon-bait—Casting-net—*Tuba*-fishing—Crocodile-catching.

361
342 AMONG the Dyaks a whole village, consisting of some twenty or thirty families, or even more, live together under one roof. This village house is built on piles made of hard wood, which raise the floor from six to twelve feet above the ground. The ascent is [417] made by a notched trunk or log, which serves as a ladder; one is fixed at each end of the house. The length of this house varies according to the number of families inhabiting it; but as the rooms occupied by the different families are built on the same plan and by a combination of labour, the whole presents a uniform and regular appearance.

342 The roof and outside walls are thatched with the leaves of the *nipa* palm, which are first made into *attap*. These are made by doubling the leaves over a stick about six feet long, each leaf overlapping the other, and sewn down with split cane or reeds. These *attap* are arranged in rows, each *attap* overlapping the one beneath it, and thus

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

342 for cooking. The shelf immediately above the fireplace
354 is set apart for smoking fish. The shelves above are filled with firewood, which is thoroughly dried by the smoke and ready for use. As the smoke from the wood fire is not conducted through the roof by any kind of chimney, it spreads itself through the loft, and blackens the beams and rafters of the roof.

342 This room also serves as a dining-room. When the
264 food is cooked, mats are spread here, and the inmates
352 squat on the floor to eat their meal. There is no furniture, the floor serving the double purpose of table and chairs.

342 This *bilik* also serves as a bedroom. At night the mats
513 for sleeping on are spread out here, and the mosquito-curtains hung up.

342 There is no window to let in the air and light, but a
354 portion of the roof is so constructed that it can be raised a foot or two, and kept open by means of a stick.

353 Round the three sides of this room are ranged the treasured valuables of the Dyaks—old jars, some of which
523 are of great value, and brass gongs, and guns. Their cups and plates are hung up in rows flat against the walls. The flooring is the same as that of the veranda, and is made of split palm or bamboo tied down with cane.
356 The floor is swept after a fashion, the refuse falling through the flooring to the ground underneath. But the room is stuffy, and not such a pleasant place as the
231 open veranda. The pigs and poultry occupy the waste space under the house.

342 From the *bilik* there is a ladder which leads to an upper
417 room, or loft (*sadau*), where they keep their tools and store their paddy. If the family be a large one, the
573 young unmarried girls sleep in this loft, the boys and young men sleeping outside in the veranda.

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

Dyak war-boats hold from thirty to a hundred men. When filled with dusky warriors with naked arms and legs just visible beneath the palm-leaf awning, paddling with a regular, vigorous stroke, with their Chief standing in the stern working the rudder with hand or foot, they form a grand sight.

When all the boats have arrived, a start is made for the enemy's country. The line of advance is most irregular. There are wide gaps between the boats, some lagging behind to cook or fish, and others, deterred by bad dreams or unpropitious omens, waiting a day or two before moving on.

When the landing-place of the enemy is reached, a camp is formed, and temporary huts are built lining the river bank. The warriors lie down to rest side by side. Their spears are stuck in the ground near them, and their shields and swords are by their side, so that they can spring to their feet in a moment, ready for battle. The boats are hauled ashore and hidden in the brushwood, to be used again on the return journey.

A War Council is held and the route decided upon, and the best way to attack the enemy discussed. On a given day the march commences, each shouldering his pack containing a cooking-pot, rice, etc. The pace is more or less rapid as long as they are far from the enemy, but slackens when they come nearer. The leaders proceed warily, as the enemy may be in ambush by the way.

The Dyaks who are expecting an attack defend their houses with a strong palisading of hard wood, strengthened by bamboo stakes fixed between the perpendicular posts, with the sharpened points projecting in all directions, presenting an impassable barrier of spikes to the invader. The whole is tied firmly together with rattan or creepers.

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

726 This fence is about six feet high, and surrounds the whole
●417 village. Two gates are made in it, but when these are closed, they present the same appearance as the rest of the palisading.

726 The landing-places and approach to the village are all protected with sharpened spikes of bamboo or hard wood. Their valuables—their jars and brass gongs, etc.—they conceal in the jungle.

If they feel confident that they are able to repel the attack of the enemy they keep the women and children at home. If there is any doubt about the matter, they too are hidden away in the forest, and when resistance becomes hopeless, they are rejoined by their relatives at some fixed rendezvous.

[201] The moment the enemy appears, the gongs are struck in a peculiar manner, three strokes following each other very rapidly, a short pause, and then three strokes again, and so on. When the neighbours hear this, they recognize the signal, and know that their friends have been attacked, and they hurry to their help.

A favourite stratagem of defence in the lower reaches of the river is to entice the leading boats of the enemy into an ambush on shore. There are sure to be some boats of the attacking party far in advance of the others, as they are anxious to be foremost in the fight. The defenders choose a convenient spot, and a strong party is placed in ambush among the trees. One or two men stroll upon the shingly bank to lure the enemy. As the warriors from the attacking boats leap ashore, the men in ambush spring from their hiding-place. They throw large stones at them, and break their wooden shields. They engage with swords and spears in a short and desperate conflict. As the main body comes round the

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

[Facing p. 88]

DYAK HOUSES

Showing the outside open platform where paddy, etc., is put out to dry. Where the eaves are very low, parts of it are often raised to admit more light into the house. The palm trees in the picture are cocoanut palms.

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7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

776 religious homage. They are, indeed, a constituent and important part of Dyak religion.

782 The sacrifices offered by the Dyaks are of two kinds—*piring* and *ginselan*.

The *piring* is an offering composed of rice cooked in bamboos, cakes, eggs, sweet potatoes, plantains, or other fruit, and sometimes small live chickens. If the offering be made in the house these things are put on a brass dish (*tabak*). If the occasion of the sacrifice requires that it [417] be offered elsewhere, a little platform is constructed, consisting of pieces of wood tied together with cane, and fixed on four sticks stuck in the ground. This is the *para piring* (the altar of sacrifice), and the offering is laid on it. It is covered with a rough roof of palm-leaf, and looks like a miniature native house, and is decorated with white flags. It is the most flimsy thing imaginable, and soon tumbles to pieces. The god or spirit is supposed to come and eat the good things provided, and go away contented. It is no use arguing with the Dyak that he can see for himself that his offering is eaten up by fowls, or pigs, or boys, who are full of mischief, and have no fear of spirits. The Dyak says the spirits eat the soul or spirit of the food ; what is left on the altar is only its outer husk, not its true essence.

I remember when I was staying at Temudok the Dyaks put up a little shed, with offerings of food, at the landing-place on the bank of the river. There was an epidemic of cholera at the time, and the spirits of disease were supposed to eat these offerings and go away contented. Among the offerings was a little live chicken, that was tied to the *para piring*, but which managed to get loose. Some of the schoolboys staying with me asked if they might catch the chicken, which was running about in the

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

313 The leaves are very thorny, and cling to the trees and branches around. The older part of the cane has no leaves. It is very tough and strong, and in size about one-quarter of an inch in diameter. It is easily split, and used for the seats of chairs, etc.

222 439 Sometimes the Dyaks join others in the collection of edible birds'-nests for the Chinese market. This is a great industry in those parts of Borneo where there are large limestone caves, in which these nests are found. The caves are farmed out by Government, and whatever is obtained over the amount paid to Government is the profit of the workers. In Upper Sarawak certain tribes possess caves in which edible birds'-nests are found, and they divide the nests with the Government.

222 Sometimes Dyaks who wish to earn a little extra money go and help these tribes in collecting birds'-nests, and get a share of the profits, or more often they go to small caves which belong to no one in particular and collect birds'-nests for themselves, and then give a share of what they find to the Government.

Some of the caves in which edible birds'-nests are found are very large. At the entrance the visitor is met by thousands of bats and swallows. The latter resemble the common swallow in appearance, but are only half as large. These small swallows make the edible nests. Inside, the cave is often like an immense amphitheatre roofed like a dome, the middle of which is over a thousand feet high. Thousands of nests are seen clinging to the pillar-like rocky sides and roof. The most flimsy-looking stages of bamboos tied together with cane are the simple means employed by the natives to collect the nests from the seemingly most inaccessible positions. [417]

Though there are rifts in the sides through which come

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

[facing p242]

A Long Dyak Village House

When a house is very long, as in this case, in addition to the ladders at each end, there are often extra ladders in the middle of the house. One of these ladders is seen on the right of the picture. The logs of wood on the ground are for walking upon.

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7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

I said in fun: "There will be plenty of room to put a pig here behind me if we manage to shoot one." The Dyaks all looked horrified, and I was told that saying such a thing as that meant with them the certainty of failure. As it happened, we succeeded in killing a wild pig, and brought it back that evening in the boat. There was much discussion among the people in the Dyak house, and they were surprised at our success after what I had said.

Madness is looked upon by the Dyaks as possession by some evil spirit. All they can do for it is to call the witch-doctors in to sing their incantations, and exorcise the evil spirit. If no good result follows, and the man is still a violent lunatic, a large wooden cage (*bubong*) is made, and the man is kept in it. This is only done in the case of dangerous and violent madmen. Harmless lunatics and idiots are allowed their freedom.

Leprosy is not unknown among the Dyaks, and occasionally cases of it are met with. There used to be a village in the Krian where there were several suffering from leprosy. When the disease is so far advanced as to make it unsafe to let them live with others in the long Dyak house, a separate little hut is put up for them at some distance away. I remember seeing a poor woman who lived by herself in this way. The people from the house would often go and see her, and take her food and water, but sometimes she would be left for days. She told me that once her fire went out, and as no one came to see her for two days, she was unable to cook any food, and had to live as best she could during that time. It must have been a lonely, unhappy life she led, and one can imagine such an one longing for death to end her troubles.

The Dyaks mark the time by the position of the sun.

the advent of Government control, the situation is changing, for the Iban are now hemmed in by boundaries beyond which slash and burn cultivation is not permitted. In the Baleh area however, a plentiful supply of land still exists, and there is, as yet, no real pressure upon the recently erected boundaries. The re-settlement of the Baleh in 1922 was under general Governmental surveillance, and each long-house community was allotted a roughly defined territory bordering the banks of the main river, or one of its tributaries. But the re-occupation was en masse, by scores of different long-house communities, and there was no system of survey, or legal registration.

136. Territories seem to have range from about five to fifteen square miles, according to the size of the community, and the most favourable sites, at the heads of the rivers, were granted to those who had remained faithful to the Brooke regime during the years of disaffection and rebellion. However, the allotment of a territory did not mean that the members of the community concerned held this land in collective, or communal ownership. What it did mean was that all *bilek-families* had *equal access* to the land. Among the Iban, ownership of land is established by the felling of primary jungle. Thereafter, the land belongs to the *bilek-family* responsible for this first felling, and it has full discretionary rights over the usufruct of the secondary jungle which springs up within a few months of the harvest. These rights are not in perpetuity however. Should a *bilek-family* migrate to another district and take up permanent residence there, its former land rights lapse; they may be assumed by remaining kindred, or if the entire community migrates, simply abandoned.

137. A pioneer community begins then, as a group having common and equal rights of access to a specified tract of virgin forest; year by year its component *bilek-families* establish ownership over different sections of this territory, until finally all of the land is privately owned. At the same time fruit-trees are being planted, and, in some areas, rubber plantations established; these too are privately owned by the *bilek-families* that plant and rear them. A long-house community consists therefore, of a series of *bilek-families* all of which hold in private ownership areas of secondary jungle, fruit trees, and sometimes, rubber plantations, within the confines of a compact territory. This much the *bilek-families* of a long-house do have in common, but farming land is never held in collective ownership.

138. Nor, among the Iban, is there anything resembling a village green (such as the *marae* of Polynesia), which belongs to the community as a whole. Privately owned land approaches to within a few feet of the long-house structure. The only exception is the burial ground, or *pendam*. This invariably consists of a spur rising from the river, on the banks of which the long-house is situated, for corpses are always carried by canoe. The jungle on the chosen spur is left in its primeval state, and never entered except for burials and on ritual occasions. Here, all *bilek-families* inter their dead, and throughout the undergrowth (for graves are left untended) are scattered jars, gongs, and many other kinds of burial property, which constitute the last inheritance of the dead. A burial ground falls into the same category as virgin jungle, over it there are no rights of ownership, but to it all *bilek-families* have full and equal rights of access. Occasionally it happens that two neighbouring long-houses share the same *pendam*, but in general, each community has its own site, where the bodies of those who once lived together lie buried.

139. We have seen that among the Iban the *bilek-family* is the basic land-owning group. This also applies to all other forms of property. Thus the long-house structure itself is made up of a series of separate apartments, each of which is privately owned. The only exception is the *tanggo*—a huge log of hardwood, adzed to shape and deeply notched at regular intervals to form a ladder by way of which entry may be gained to the elevated *tanju* of the long-house. Often, they are about 20 feet in length, and weigh hundreds of pounds; sometimes, several *tangga*, connected by small stagings, are required. In the Baleh, *tangga* always lead on to the open *tanju*—either in the front of the house, or at the ends. They are spaced out at even intervals, and in most long-houses there is one entrance to about every seven *bileks*. In Rumah Nyala, for example, with 22 actual apartments, there were three entrances (c.f. Figure 2), while Rumah Tungku, with 45 apartments, had eight, and Rumah Sibat, with 29 apartments, four entrances.

140. The making of a *tangga*, transporting it back to the long-house, and then erecting it, complete with railings, is no light task. Usually it is undertaken by the men of the small group of *bilek-families*, whose regular way of entry it will become. But if it be the main *tangga* of the long-house (i.e. the first entrance to be constructed by the founding families), all the men of the long-house join in the work. This is mainly for ritual reasons. The main *tangga* is looked upon as a kind of portal connecting the long-house with the outside world; by this route both good and evil may come to the inhabitants, but by proper ritual performances, it is possible, say the Iban, to consecrate the *tangga* so that it will become a ladder by way of which riches and good fortune are carried up into their house. Understandably, all *bilek-families* are eager to join in the ceremony, and enjoy the benefits it brings. In the full scale rites, various of the gods (*petara*) are summoned, in a chanted invocation (*timang*), to visit the long-house, and on their arrival, offerings are made and sacrifices performed. In the *timang* the attributes and the actions of the gods are described. With them they have brought a marvellous *tangga*, which has the power to attract to the long-house all that men desire. It cannot be seen, of course, for it is in the form of soul-stuff, but as the gods erect it, the Iban put their newly hewn *tangga* in place, and the substances of the two become magically fused. Further offerings and sacrifices are made, prayers of consecration uttered, and the ceremony is concluded. Such a *gawai tangga* is usually organized by the *tuai burong* (augur), but the materials used in the offerings (e.g. *tuak*, eggs, rice, etc.) are supplied in equal proportions by all the *bilek-families* of the long-house. It is thus a corporate rite, involving the whole community, and the *tangga* is the common property of all those who participated.